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WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6592 of September 15, 1993

National Hispanic Heritage Month, 1993

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

One of our Nation's greatest strengths is its vast diversity. The mosaic of races, ethnicities, and religious groups that comprise America provides us with a powerful energy and an ability to see the world from many viewpoints. Since our country's inception, Hispanic Americans have always been an integral part of this great mosaic. Indeed the history, culture, and traditions of America are greatly influenced by the contributions of those individuals who have their origins in Spain and Latin America.

While the impact of the Hispanic culture is manifest in our Nation's customs and traditions, this legacy continues on beyond the pages of history. Today, Hispanic Americans continue to make important contributions to our society. It would be impossible to think of American Government, business, industry, Armed Forces, agriculture, science, sports, and the arts without noting the presence and full participation of Hispanic Americans. Ellen Ochoa, who has served America proudly as our first Hispanic woman astronaut; Cesar Chavez, whose lifelong passion and commitment uplifted the lives of millions of agricultural workers; Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros and Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña; Master Sergeant Roy P. Benavidez, who won the Medal of Honor for his service in Vietnam; and millions of other Hispanic Americans whose hard work keeps our Nation moving—all of these patriotic Americans draw their heritage from the rich Hispanic culture.

Many of the traditions that Americans hold so dear are deeply rooted in the Hispanic American values of a strong sense of family, devotion to religious beliefs, and dedication to liberty and democracy. Committed dearly to these precious ideals, Hispanic Americans are helping all of us to uphold the legacy of our democratic society.

America is an ongoing experiment—an unfinished work. There is much for all of us still to accomplish in order to ensure a brighter and more peaceful world for our children. I know that Hispanic Americans, always conscious of the traditions of their forebears, will continue to work with Americans of every racial, religious, and ethnic background to confront our Nation's health, housing, educational, and human rights concerns. The principles that are such a part of the Hispanic American tradition will serve all of our people well as we strive to address the challenges that the future holds for us.

To commemorate the Hispanic American contributions to our Nation, the Congress, by Public Law 90-498 of September 17, 1968, as amended, has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a

proclamation designating the month beginning September 15 and ending October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month beginning September 15, 1993, and ending October 15, 1993, as National Hispanic Heritage Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 6593 of September 17, 1993

Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

September 17, 1787, is one of the most important, yet ironically one of the least known, dates in American history. On that day the delegates to the Philadelphia Convention completed their work by signing and reporting to the Continental Congress their proposed Constitution of the United States. Despite the enormous growth of our Nation in terms of population, industry, culture, and technology since 1787, the document drafted by 55 patriots during that summer in Philadelphia remains the fundamental law of our land.

Chief Justice Marshall wrote that the Constitution was "designed to approach immortality as nearly as human institutions can approach it." Our Constitution is by far the oldest written framework for government in existence. The extraordinary longevity of the Constitution suggests that the British statesman William Gladstone was not exaggerating when he described our Constitution as "the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man."

The Constitution's endurance is, of course, a tribute to the wisdom and statesmanship of the Framers. But it is also a tribute to our continuing commitment to the fundamental precept of constitutionalism. The Constitution has served us well, but the same document, if given to a people without an appreciation of and a commitment to the rule of law, would be worse than useless. Thus, as we mark the 206th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution, we celebrate not only the genius of the Founders, but also the fidelity of our people to the principles embodied in the Constitution.

If we are to maintain that commitment to government under law, we need to read and study the Constitution. Only by becoming familiar with its provisions can we understand and truly appreciate the Constitution's principles. Among the groups of Americans that have demonstrated their familiarity with the Constitution are naturalized Americans. As part of the naturalization process, persons seeking citizenship